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BOTANICAL GAZETTE.

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LETTER FROM A. FENDLER.—Dr. Asa Gray has kindly placed the following letter in our hands which will be of great interest to the readers of the GAZETTE:

NEAR PORT OF SPAIN, ISLAND OF TRINIDAD, Feb. 6th, 1878.

Prof. Asa Gray, M. D.:

MY DEAR SIR:— * * * The Botanic Garden, founded as early as the year 1827, contains some of the grandest and most magnificent specimens of the vegetable kingdom, introduced from all parts of the world, special attention being paid to the introduction and propagation of useful trees and plants. My health, though not on the retrograde, is far from being satisfactory. I have commenced putting the ferns into sets, but the rainy days during the greater part of January interfered very much, and December proved to be the dampest month of the whole season. I have now 11 species of Ferns and 5 of *Lycopodiaceæ*.

On the 20th of November the printer who printed the labels for my plants offered me a house and lot for sale which he owned in the same street that I lived on. Tired of being the tenant of uncomfortable quarters, I bought for \$290 the house and lot thus offered me, Nov. 26th, and three days later moved into it. The lot is 46 feet in front by 120 feet deep, but the fences so dilapidated as to require new ones.

The house is 22 by 12 feet, is old, and needs considerable patching and repairing, all of which we (my brother and myself) intend to do with our own hands. A considerable part of it we have already done, the work claiming much of our time, that otherwise might have been devoted to collecting of plants.

To give you an idea of the vegetation which such a small parcel of land can support allow me to subjoin the following list of trees and plants the lot contains besides the house, leaving moreover plenty of vacant space in front of the house for a small flower garden. There are: 1 bread fruit tree; Mango tree, (both very large trees); 2 Orange trees, 20–25 feet high, with plenty of sweet oranges for our own use; 1 Papaw-tree (*Carica Papaya*); 12 coffee trees all in bearing condition. Also, a few stalks of sugar cane; some small orange trees yet to be grafted; quite a number of banana plants of 2 or 3 kinds (some in fruit); Tania (*Colocasia esculenta*), the eatable tubers of which are held in high estimation; Cassava (*Janipla Manihot*); 1 Star-apple tree (*Chrysophyllum Cainito*); and in one fence corner, not far from the house, a young bamboo bush with shoots 25 feet high, affording a grateful shade through most part of the day; 1 Guava tree; 1 tree-cotton plant (*Gossypium Barbadosense*) full with blossoms and young fruit, its woody stem 10 inches in circumference and 10½ feet high. Besides these there are plants of less dimensions such as Ginger, 2 kinds of Ochra, 2 kinds Cayenne pepper; several arborescent pea- and bean-plants. To make this list more complete I have planted two young Cocoa-nut trees, said to begin bearing fruit in their 3d or 4th year, also some cuttings of a superior kind of grape-vine showing some growth already. The first bunch of fruit that we gathered from our banana plants contained 107 bananas of a delicious flavor. a still larger bunch touching nearly the ground will be ripe in a week or two, and others have just come into-flowering. It is therefore natural enough that in my present position, having a home of my own, I should and do feel more at ease, more independent, and enjoy a multitude of little pleasures which I did not when living in a shanty-like house half as big as mine, in another man's dirty yard, crowded in on all sides by disagreeable folks, besides paying \$4.25 house-rent a month. And

then there is in my present situation some satisfaction in going to the trees and gathering the ripe oranges whenever inclined to do so; and some pleasure also in watching the growth and development of leaves, fruit and flowers of strange tropical plants, all our own. Observing the vigor and rapidity of pushing forth of the banana's huge flower-stalk and the unfolding of its fruit, all so nicely arranged, no man at all mindful of the operations of nature can remain indifferent, cold and unmoved. This enormous activity cannot but gently remind him of a mighty power or powers working simultaneously within millions of cells—not a hap-hazard clash of atom against atom, which would end in inextricable confusion, but a working and weaving in unison, harmoniously and steadily, the crude material into objects of exquisite beauty and regularity; the plan adopted for each species vigorously followed up and adhered to in places thousands of miles apart, subject, however, now and then, to gradual modifications.

My new home is situated so as to bring me a little nearer town, is in a higher and drier locality, at the foot and in front of a prominent hill called "Belmont" on which a century ago the governors of the island loved to dwell in stately mansions, showing now nothing but the low remnants of a few ruined walls. This mountain when cleared of its high trees offers, no doubt, most splendid views on three sides. Towards the west it takes in the town of Port of Spain and its suburbs and a great extent of the Gulf of Paria; towards the north and east it exhibits the northern mountain ranges running out westward into a bold narrow strip, as well as the high promontories of the Venezuelan coast in the dim distance. Of late this once beautiful mountain has been altogether neglected, and suffered to run into a kind of wild bushy park; only on one side there is an open spot bare of trees, forming a kind of glade, and that is opposite to where I live, extending downwards to within ten yards of my front fence. I find this climate much more humid than that of Venezuela, and it takes all of a botanical collector's ingenuity to guard his dried specimens against the detrimental effects of dampness combined with high temperature. Even now in February, while trying to distribute my Ferns into sets, I sometimes have to gather them up in a hurry and lay them aside when a rain comes down without warning. I find that during December and January the night temperatures are considerable lower and the mid-day temperatures higher than during the summer months, descending in January as low as 64 deg. F., and rising as high as 97 deg. F. * * * —A. FENDLER.

ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF CERTAIN PLANTS IN MISSOURI; BY G. C. BROADHEAD. (Concluded from page 53).—*Eupatorium perfoliatum*, L. Boneset. Has only been found in the eastern part of Missouri, as far west as Sullivan county, but not in southwest Missouri.

Silphium terebinthinaceum, L. This plant abounds on prairies in Fayette, Sangamon, Macon, Christian and Montgomery counties, Illinois; is found in southeast Missouri and rarely in north Missouri; observed in Ralls, in Maries, common in Cole, and found southwardly, but not in Western Missouri.

Coreopsis grandiflora, Common in Bates and Vernon, but not found in north Missouri.

Pyrrhopappus grandiflorus, Nutt. In Bates, Vernon and eastern Missouri, but not in North or Northwestern Missouri.

Conoclinium celestinum, DC. Abounds in southeast Missouri, is also found in Cole and Bates counties and southwardly: Is a very pretty plant.

Vernonia Arkansana, DC., I have found in Jasper county, but not North.

Troximon cuspidatum, Pursh. In Jackson and Cass and probably southwardly.

Apogon humilis, Ell. In Cass and Bates.

Boltonia latisquama. I have only found in western and southeast Missouri.